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S E C R E T ROME 000551

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/22/2016

TAGS: PREL IT IZ ITALIAN POLITICS

SUBJECT: FOLLOWUP: GOI SEEKS USG RESPONSE ON LEGAL

ASSISTANCE CASES

REF: ROME 223

Classified By: AMBASSADOR RONALD P. SPOGLI, Reasons 1.4 (b) (c) (d)

¶1. (S/NF) REFTEL NOTED ITALIAN MINISTER OF JUSTICE HAD APPEALED TO AMBASSADOR FOR RESPONSES ON SEVERAL OUTSTANDING BILATERAL LEGAL ASSISTANCE ISSUES. TWO INVOLVED ACTS OF TERROR IN IRAQ AGAINST ITALIAN CITIZENS; ANOTHER RELATES TO THE FATAL SHOOTING OF AN ITALIAN INTELLIGENCE OFFICER. THE MESSAGE PROPOSED SEVERAL POSSIBLE WAYS FORWARD.

¶2. (S/NF) THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENT HAS NOW FORWARDED TO THE JUSTICE ATTACHE HERE YET ANOTHER MUTUAL LEGAL ASSISTANCE TREATY (MLAT) REQUEST RELATING TO THE THIRD MATTER, THE DEATH OF INTELLIGENCE AGENT CALIPARI.

¶3. (S/NF) COMMENT: WE DO NOT KNOW IF PRIME MINISTER BERLUSCONI WILL RAISE THESE ISSUES WHEN HE MEETS POTUS IN WASHINGTON ON FEBRUARY 28. WE DO KNOW THE GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN FENDING OFF PRESSURE FROM MILAN PROSECUTORS TO FORWARD TO THE USG PROVISIONAL ARREST WARRANTS FOR 22 SUPPOSED CIA AGENTS INVOLVED IN THE ALLEGED KIDNAPPING OF ABU OMAR. WE ALSO KNOW THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENT ATTACHES CONSIDERABLE POLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE TO A RESPONSE ON THESE OTHER IRAQ-RELATED REQUESTS, SINCE THE ITALIAN JUSTICE MINISTER HAS NOW RAISED THEM WITH BOTH THE ATTORNEY GENERAL AND THE AMBASSADOR. POST RECOMMENDS AN EXPEDITED USG RESPONSE ON SOME OR ALL OF THE THREE CASES DETAILED REFTEL, IF POSSIBLE BEFORE FEBRUARY 28. END COMMENT.

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